



Annual Report
2024



We envision a community free of violence
and engaged in promoting healthy relationships
and the well-being of all of its members.



“...I sent a gal to you guys at ASPEN the other day who needed to get back to another state after I had arrested her abusive boyfriend. ASPEN has her out of there the same day. It was incredibly impressive and I can't thank you guys enough for what you all do for these girls.”

— Officer David Evans, Livingston Police Department

Dear Friends,

WE START THIS NOTE with a heartfelt thank you to the many individuals, businesses, foundations, agencies, and other funders who show their commitment to our mission by making financial contributions to ASPEN.

The board and staff of ASPEN are finishing up work on its next 3-year strategic plan. All of us agree, the number one priority remains providing direct support services to survivors and victims of abuse, stalking, human trafficking and dating violence. ASPEN is also committed to breaking the cycle of violence by providing violence prevention education to school-aged children in our 3-county service area and by providing community members with workshops, presentations, and trainings around a myriad of pertinent topics.

We get the work done by hiring and retaining qualified, compassionate, and professional staff. They are the backbone of the organization and do the heavy lifting the job requires day in and day out. ASPEN works to compensate staff fairly and to properly care for their mental health by providing access to a therapist who specializes in secondary trauma and compassion fatigue. Year after year, staff have stated this benefit allows them to focus on doing the best work possible but without “taking it home.”

ASPEN's programs will remain the same, with the addition of a new initiative to engage men in the work of violence prevention. It is called “Men's Work”. By engaging in men's work, men acknowledge their role in challenging traditional stereotypes of masculinity that perpetuate violence. This work involves promoting healthy, respectful relationships, advocating for gender equality, and fostering accountability among male peers and communities. Watch for more men's resources on ASPEN's website in the coming months.

We hope you enjoy this year's annual report and will remain a loyal and committed part of ASPEN's success. Thanks again, we look forward to providing services to those in need and being a part of the solution for creating a violence-free society.

All the best,

Heidi Barrett
Executive Director

Mary Ann Bearden
Board Chair

Advocacy & support

ASPEN'S services are wide-ranging and personalized. All ASPEN services are free of charge and include: 24-hour Support Line; emergency housing; crisis intervention; civil legal advocacy; safety planning; relocation aid; court accompaniment; access to a Montana Legal Services Association attorney; and forensic medical exam support. We provide additional assistance with housing, finding employment, or relocating to a new community. Staff are available for walk in appointments or clients may schedule time with an advocate. ASPEN staff also travel regularly to Sweet Grass and Meagher counties for client visits or community meetings. At ASPEN, we believe clients know what is best for them and we work to empower them to make their own decisions regarding their future. ASPEN works under strict confidentiality agreements. Services at ASPEN are always client-led. 🌿

STATISTICS (PAST 12 MONTHS):

532 Clients served
 708 Support Line calls answered
 38 Criminal justice services
 352 Civil justice services

🌿 **ASPEN'S 24/7 Support Line:**
406-222-8154



“ ASPEN helped my daughter with emergency housing for her and her kids...She was in a long-time volatile relationship and not until she reached out to ASPEN on the 24-hour support line did she realize help was available, and available immediately. She was provided with a large private room at the Safe House, bunk beds for the kids, a full bathroom and large kitchen. Everything was provided, including bedding, clothing, food and personal care items...Our family is so grateful.” — Anonymous Parent of ASPEN Client



“A client was referred to our office after speaking to the court clerk; she had fled her home with her young children that morning. ASPEN staff were able to do an intake, get her and her children clothing and food and help her understand available legal options. Through a special grant, we put her in touch with an attorney from Montana Legal Services Association to petition the courts for a Temporary Order of Protection, prepare for her hearing and advise her about putting together a parenting plan for the long term.”

— ASPEN Client Story

Photo: Melanie Maganias

Safe House

ASPEN is able to provide emergency shelter in its Safe House. The house is a 5-bedroom, 3 full-bath home with two living areas, a large kitchen, patio and private yard. Clients are screened for eligibility and then when they enter the program, they are able to find the rest, safety, and privacy they need to begin the process of recovery. The time at the Safe House offers clients the opportunity to work on their goals and action plans while not having to worry about paying rent or where their next meal will come from. The Safe House has all the amenities of a regular home; it is completely and fully stocked at all times. Many of you make regular donations of household cleaning products, consumables such as toilet and facial tissue and paper towels. To learn more about the Safe House needs, visit: <https://www.aspenmt.org/inkinddonations>. 🌿

STATISTICS (PAST 12 MONTHS):

1,488 Nights in the safe house

159 Nights in hotels

70 Women served

31 Children served

2 Men served

Violence prevention education & community outreach

AT ASPEN, our ultimate goal is to not be needed. This is a bold statement, but we are working towards creating a society free from violence. ASPEN's TREE (Trust, Respect, Empowerment, and Empathy) program teaches the fundamentals of healthy relationships, power dynamics, boundaries, and consent beginning with kindergartners and working up to grade 12. All lessons are appropriate for each age group and are aligned with Montana core standards. ASPEN is reaching students in Park, Sweet Grass and Meagher counties—even in remote locations like McLeod and Cooke City. By exploring these concepts and emphasizing each individual's critical thinking skills, students learn self-esteem, autonomy, and how to lead lives of compassion and empathy towards others. 🌿

“ I work within our local schools and their associated communities, I see victims of domestic and sexual violence struggling to overcome the harmful effects of these crimes. The passionate and dedicated staff at ASPEN embrace each individual and situation with love, compassion and a commitment to supporting them through a process of recovery.”

— Juanita Bueter
RN, BSN, Park County Public Health Nurse

🌿 **ASPEN'S 24/7 Support Line:**
406-222-8154



STATISTICS (PAST 12 MONTHS):

2,262 Adults reached through outreach

4,226 Children reached with violence prevention education at 112 events

62 Community members participated in *Mindful Resilience for Trauma*



“By actively participating in “men’s work” and supporting ASPEN, men contribute to creating safer, more equitable environments where domestic violence is not tolerated and where all individuals can thrive free from fear and harm.”

— Christopher Spromberg, Psy.D.
Licensed Clinical Psychologist | Livingston HealthCare

Men’s Work

ASPEN’S newest program, “men’s work” refers to the intentional involvement of men in addressing and combating gender-based violence within their communities and beyond. Historically, discussions around domestic violence have often centered on women as victims and men as perpetrators. However, recognizing that men are crucial allies in the effort to prevent and eradicate domestic violence is pivotal.

Men can engage in violence prevention through various proactive measures. Firstly, education and awareness-building play fundamental roles. Men can educate themselves and others about the root causes of domestic violence, such as power imbalances and unhealthy forms of masculinity, and actively challenge these norms. Secondly, promoting positive behaviors and attitudes towards women and marginalized genders within personal relationships and social circles is crucial. This includes supporting survivors, listening without judgment, and intervening when witnessing potential instances of abuse or disrespect. Additionally, men can advocate for policy changes and resources that support survivors and hold perpetrators accountable.

By engaging in “men’s work,” men acknowledge their role in challenging traditional stereotypes of masculinity that perpetuate violence. This work involves promoting healthy, respectful relationships, advocating for gender equality, and fostering accountability among male peers and communities. 🌿

🌿 To learn more, please join ASPEN on October 23, 2024 from 5:30-6:30 pm at The 1900 (103 N. Main Street, Livingston). Dr. Chris Spromberg will present “Engaging Men in Violence Prevention.” The event is FREE and open to the public. To learn more and to RSVP, respond to info@aspenmt.org by October 18th.

LGBTQ support



ASPEN is dedicated to providing support for our LGBTQ community members of any age. For youth and young adults ASPEN provides this support in the form of its Queer Straight Alliance (QSA) which was officially formed in 2018 and has been growing ever since. The mission of the QSA is to promote trust and acceptance throughout our communities and provide a safe non-judgmental space for lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender and queer or questioning youth who share the common vision of social equality and strong community values.

We would like to thank the Livingston Pride Coalition (LPC) for donating the bulk of proceeds from its highly popular Drag Shows to ASPEN in FY24. ASPEN supports LPC's mission to benefit our community through engaging events, dialogue, and understanding. 🌿

ASPEN does not discriminate on the basis of race, national origin, religion, sex, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or age in delivery of services. We serve and support those who identify as straight, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer.

Health, wellness & resiliency

ASPEN believes a happy society is a healthy society. Through ASPEN's Mindful Resilience for Trauma, participants are not only able to recognize how the body reacts to stress, but also learn how to regulate reactions. Often, negative reactions to stress can result in violence—both physical and emotional. We believe in working to change society one person at a time. Each 5-week session is led by a certified instructor and is in collaboration with the Movement Collaborative in Livingston.

ASPEN's own wellness policy for staff includes access to counseling sessions every 6 – 8 weeks with a certified facilitator for compassion fatigue and secondary trauma relief. ASPEN works to promote employee well-being through work practices, a positive culture, and leadership. 🌿



ASPEN provides free health and wellness programs to community members.

Thank you!

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Thanks to all the individuals and businesses who made in-kind donations to ASPEN in FY24. Total of In-kind goods and service: \$67,417.

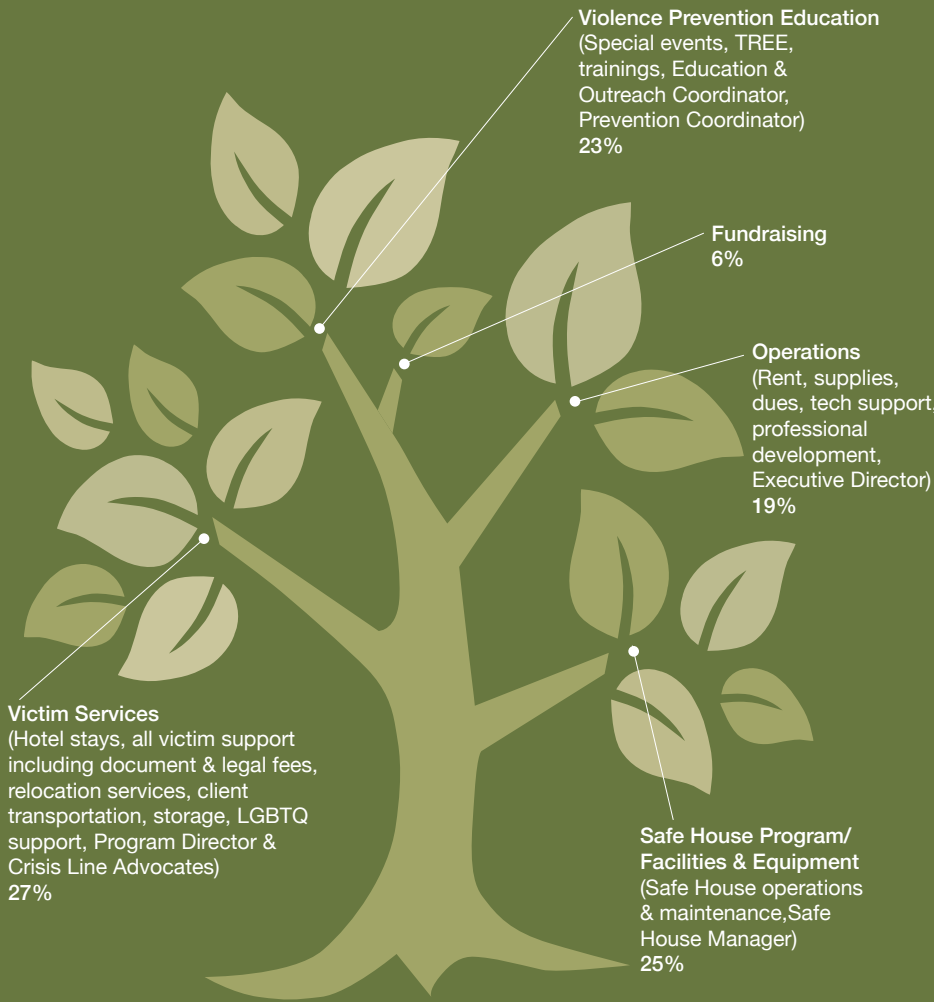
Thank you to all who attended the Drag Shows!

** Every effort is made to list donors correctly. In case of an error or omission, please accept our apologies.*



Photos Pages 14-16:
ASPEN Community Outreach &
Fundraising event

Photos this page:
Top: ASPEN Staff
Bottom: ASPEN Board of Directors



\$627,411

INCOME

\$539,451

EXPENSES

\$587,886

TOTAL BUDGET

Thanks to generous support from individual donors, businesses, foundation grants, government grants, local grantors, event income and 3rd party event income, ASPEN ended the year with a positive financial position. Full financials are available upon request. Contact Heidi heidi@aspennmt.org or call 406-222-5902, ext. 2 to request.

Note: \$10,247 is held as funds for a 3rd party (ASPEN serves as fiscal sponsor for the Livingston Pride Coalition).

OUR MISSION

The mission of ASPEN – Abuse Support & Prevention Education Network – is to provide support services to victims/survivors of domestic and sexual violence and human trafficking and empower them to create safe and healthy lives for themselves and their families. ASPEN is also committed to breaking the cycle of violence by providing educational and awareness activities in the community.

OUR VALUES

- We believe that everyone has the right to live a life free from violence.
- We believe that all individuals deserve to be treated with respect and understanding.
- We believe that domestic and sexual violence are community problems and need a community solution.
- We believe that all individuals have a right to privacy and confidentiality.
- We believe education and awareness are crucial to individual and community change.
- We believe that every individual has inherent worth and is a valuable asset to our community.

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Emily Jones
Education & Outreach Coordinator

Stella Newman
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Jessica Isaacs
Prevention Coordinator

Kelly Miller
Weekend Advocate

Val Newton
Database Manager

Bear Mays
Peer Leader

Our heartfelt thanks to our team of Volunteer Support Line Advocates whose time and care sustain our advocacy and outreach efforts.



PO Box 653
411 E. Callender Street
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www.aspenmt.org
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